

On Your Doorstep

GLEN HOUSING ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2018



Your views drive us forward

Overall satisfaction with what we do is up but we still have work to do on repairs, housing quality and opportunities to participate.

That is what you told us in this year's Tenant Satisfaction survey. We say it each year, but your views really are vital to how we plan and deliver services. This year you gave us a very clear steer on what we do well and what we need to improve on.

A big thank you to the 169 tenants (more than 1 in 3 of you) who completed and returned their forms.

The survey also shows how we are doing compared to previous years and how

we rate alongside other Housing Associations across Scotland. On the pleasing side, you report improvements on previous years in five measures and we are either significantly ahead of the rest of Scotland on these same key areas, on a par with one and behind on two. (see the table on page 3). What's important now is that we focus on what we need to do better and keep improving on what you tell us we do well.



**TURN ON TO
FACEBOOK AND STAY
IN THE PICTURE**

Now we know that 76% of our tenants have online access, it will be even easier to keep you right up to date with what's happening in and around your neighbourhood.

For all Glen news and details of events and happenings please follow us on Facebook.
<https://www.facebook.com/GlenHousing>

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of our neighbourhood

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For up to the minute information, phone us on 01592 621188

ACTIONS STARTED

Here are some of the early actions we have taken on your biggest concerns:



Introducing a series of random post repair telephone checks

On repairs

The two main criticisms are around the quality of repairs and the speed of completion.

This is clearly unacceptable and while we already have a process in place for post inspecting at least 20% of all repairs carried out we are now going to introduce a series of random post repair telephone checks. As well as the Repairs Satisfaction Survey forms being sent out with each repair, our staff have started making calls to randomly selected tenants about the quality and speed of the repair just carried out. This will give us an up-to-the-minute picture of what's happening and allow us to respond early to any dips below the standards we expect. By this time next year, we expect to see an improved picture.

On the quality of housing

Many of our homes were built in the early 90s so we know of the need to keep them up to the standards you, and Glen, want. The rent increase agreed this year will ensure we are able to keep our long term planned maintenance programme going.

This year we will invest:



New roughcasting.

£101,000

Paint the external timber on around 200 homes

£90,000

Replace back and front doors on 40 homes

£56,000

Paint the fences at 246 properties.

£107,500

Replace the fascias on 190 homes

£20,000

Paint common stairs in three blocks.

£9,000

Replace smoke alarms in 20 homes

£160,000

Apply new roughcast treatments to 23 homes

At a total cost of approximately **£543,500** these improvements are due to be completed by end of March 2019.

Remember, we welcome your thoughts and ideas on every aspect of what we do. Don't wait for the next tenant satisfaction survey – contact us today.

On opportunities to participate

We never stop trying to involve tenants in our activities, plans and policies. From what you told us, we need to work harder to find better and more exciting ways for you to get involved in the Association – it is after all your Glen.

Already our Community Worker Celine, has been actively making appointments with tenants to chat about what really matters, how we can improve the way we communicate and much, much more. Changes have already been proposed to our Recharges Policy as a result of these head-to-heads with Céline – which proves the point that when we know, we act.... and a big thank you to those tenants who took the time to help us with the review of this policy during the last couple of months.

COMMUNICATING WITH Céline our community worker



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SUMMARY OF FIGURES FROM GLEN HOUSING TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEYS 2006 TO 2017

% measure of very and fairly satisfied	Glen Housing 2006	Glen Housing 2011	Glen Housing 2014	Glen Housing 2017	Average RSLs 2017
Overall satisfaction with services	89%	91%	94%	94%	90%
Satisfaction with repairs	84%	89%	92%	92%	94%*
Satisfaction with housing quality	89%	88%	91%	89%	89%
Satisfaction with standard of home on moving in	-	-	91%	96%	92%*
Keeping tenants informed	91%	94%	93%	94%	92%
Satisfaction with opportunities to participate	-	-	85%	83%	84%
Rent is value for money	70%	83%	86%	87%	82%
Satisfaction with neighbourhood management	89%	88%	92%	93%	88%



Funday, Funday

New Broom event sweeps up

In April, up to 1,000 people turned out to support the Broom's first Fun Day. And, what a day it was. A magician, birds of prey, pony rides, face painting, inflatables, a fire engine and police car, a host of arts and crafts and abundant good food were all in the mix – in and around the Balmaise Community Centre.

The event organised by Glen, along with Balmaise Centre Groups and members of the newly formed Balmaise Community Centre Steering Group got the thumbs up from those that came along and could well become a firm fixture in the calendar.



Magnus Drives on in the sun

Yes, it was blazing all day at the Magnus Drive Fun Day and that meant it was 'taps off' for some and 'hats on' for others. It was another magical day at this so popular annual event and because it fell, as usual, on the first day of the schools' summer holiday there was a special carnival atmosphere in the air.

We think the pictures here say it all.



PEOPLE ON THE MOVE



Ben's placement ends with a happy new start

Well done Ben Chatambarara who, after completing his 3-year training placement with Glen, secured himself a full-time permanent job with the Fife Housing Register at Fife Council. During his time with us, Ben not only made himself a well-loved presence at Glen, he gained a Postgraduate Diploma in Housing Studies, with Distinction from Stirling University. He will be sorely missed but, we are sure he will prosper with the Council – our loss is their gain!



Cassie's on the up

Cassie Ratcliffe may have originally joined us on a six-month community jobs placement but through her hard work and determination she has now secured herself a permanent role in the admin section. (This vacancy arose following Kim's promotion to Housing Assistant) Well done Cassie. You have proven to yourself and others out there that when you take opportunities and work hard, chances can open up for you.

OurPower
making energy fairer




Glen is delighted to team up with Our Power, a not for profit energy supplier set up specially for the needs of Social Housing tenants. Now, when a house becomes vacant we automatically switch the supply in that home to Our Power. New tenants always have the option to choose their own energy supplier.

But, here are six reasons Glen has opted for Our Power.

- one of the lowest-cost energy tariffs in Scotland
- the same price whether you choose Pay as You Go or Direct Debit
- flexible ways to pay including online, by phone or over the counter
- a fairer energy process – no lock-in fees
- flexible 'friendly credit' for Pay as You Go customers. We'll keep your supply going during evenings and weekends until you're able to top-up
- excellent customer service – helpful advisors, based in Scotland and free calls from a landline or a mobile.

For more on Our Power, smart meters, how to switch and the tariffs available, visit Our Power's website, call free on 0808 168 4534 or ask for details at Glen's office.

Rent rise – a necessary step

Majority of tenants agree increase after consultation

It is never easy to make the decision to raise our rents, especially during a time of hardship for so many people. But, a good secure home in a good neighbourhood really matters to people as our consultation with tenants proved. This is a higher increase than we made in the past. But, we have historically charged lower rents than others in Fife and we do need to make sure we remain a viable business and are around long and into the future.

The 6% increase which came in force from April 2018 allows us to meet current commitments, maintain service levels and invest in planned improvements.

The consultation consisted of a full postal survey (with an options leaflet attached) and surgeries in Glenrothes and Levenmouth. Also, information was made available on our Facebook page. At every turn we sought to provide clear information on how the three options presented would impact on the average weekly rent.

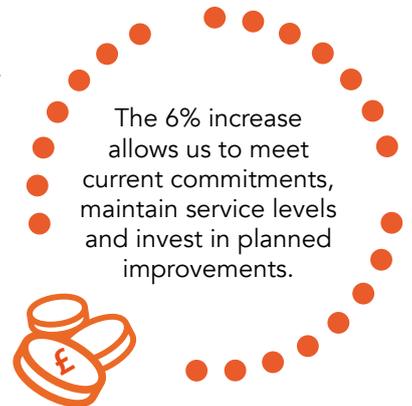
Of the 110 responses received (almost a quarter of all tenants) here are how preferences were cast.

60% backed a 5-6% increase

24% backed a 6-7% increase

16% backed a 3-5% increase

If you want more details on the consultation, please contact the office on 01592 621188.



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AFTER MANY YEARS THE ANNUAL GARDEN AWARDS HAVE WILTED

Nothing lifts local spirits like the fragrance and colours of a beautiful garden.

That's why for many years now we have celebrated the very best our neighbourhood gardeners have to offer – the annual Gardening Awards have done just that. But just as flowers flourish and die, the awards need freshening up. We will be rethinking what can best be done to encourage more of our tenants to make their gardens that bit more special. Until then, we will plant the seeds on some other ideas and come back with something better in time for next summer.



Meanwhile, keep up the great work gardeners and keep spreading the joy.

If you want more details on the consultation, please contact the office on 01592 621188.

Even Coronation Street is in on the act

Bringing our Community Centres back to vivid life

The importance of a Community Centre at the heart of the neighbourhood has been trumpeted by Coronation Street producers over the past couple of years. Why? Because, like us, they know that a Community Centre provides the best possible opportunity for local people to gather, meet, play, learn new skills, get fit, attend or take part in dance or music shows and let's be honest, enjoy some time out of the house. There is no 'one size fits all' for what makes a successful Community Centre - that's because each neighbourhood is different.

Glen is working tirelessly to bring the Community Centres at Collydean and Balmaise into full use. Here's an update on both.



At Collydean we are just awaiting a lease agreement from Fife Council which will give the new voluntary Board total responsibility for the Centre's running. Already, as you will see from the programme enclosed with this newsletter, there are things going on right now. With your ideas, we expect the number of activities to swell. But, we need people, like you, to tell us and help us turn the Collydean Centre into a vibrant place with something for every age group and taste.

Also, if you haven't done so yet, come along to the Community Café – open between 11am and 2pm every Thursday and Friday – enjoy homemade soups, stovies, selection of wraps and baguettes and much more.

No Malaise at Balmaise

If proof was ever needed of the demand for a fully functioning centre at the heart of the Broom community, then April's Fun Day which saw 1,000 people turn out over four hours, surely nailed it.

That's why Glen is working closely with a new local group 'The Balmaise Community Centre Steering Group' who share our ambition of a Centre that offers something for everyone and is always busy. Of course, we need more people to come on board and join this big effort to bring the centre into full

use. What would you like to see there? What can you offer? What would you and your friends like to be able to do in the centre?

Check out the Friends at Balmaise Facebook page today or contact Celine at Glen's office to tell us how you can help.

The Steering Group have also opened up the Balmaise Coffee Stop on a Wednesday between 10.30 and 2pm.....pop along to the Centre and grab a cuppa and see what is going on.



Come and enjoy a night of relaxation and fun - honestly

This year Glen's Annual General Meeting is happening at 7.00pm on the evening of 13 September at the Collydean Community Centre. Invites will be sent to all our tenants and members closer to the time.

Now, before you say "That will be boring", "it doesn't concern me" or "I wouldn't know what to do when I come" – this is our promise.

- Formal business will take only a few minutes.
- You will be treated to refreshments.



- You will be able to have an informal chat with staff or members of the Board.
- Oh, and you will meet some of your neighbours too.

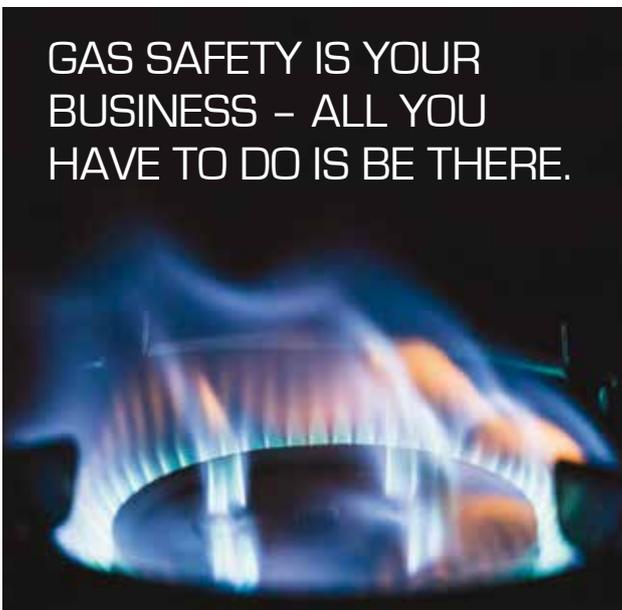
The issues that will be discussed are right up your street – literally.

This is your home, your family, your neighbourhood and your future.

Come along, find out what's happening and grab your chance to whisper in our ears. With only 83% of our tenants saying that they are happy with opportunities to participate – this is a chance for those who want to take part but feel it is difficult to speak about what we can do more of, and do better.



GAS SAFETY IS YOUR BUSINESS – ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS BE THERE.



No-one needs reminded of the dangers of Gas if things go wrong. But, sometimes we need a reminder that Gas Safety is only assured if we get the checks carried out at least once a year. In fact, that is a requirement by law for Glen.

When you get a Call Card from our contractor, Kingdom Gas Services, giving you a date and time – please either be there when they ask or

contact them or us, to arrange an alternative time.

Failure to do either, means Gas Engineers are wasting their time knocking at an empty house. If that happens three times and it's almost a year since the last service, the engineer will cap your gas meter – you will be asked to pay for this too. Don't let it get that far.

SO, PLEASE KEEP YOURSELF, YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR NEIGHBOURS SAFE BY ALLOWING ACCESS TO THE GAS ENGINEER.